

A Critical Analysis of the Influence of Sufism On the Bhakti Movement

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Introduction : Sufism has always been glorified without analyzing its actual role played in the socio-political context in India. Of late, some selected scholars have gone to the extent of discrediting Indian tradition, heritage and philosophy by dubbing that Sankaracharya (509-477 BCE or 788-820 CE), Manickavasagar (dated to 5th to 9th century of various scholars), Ramanuja (c. 1017-1137) and others were influenced by Islam or at least by Sufism and so on. Therefore, an attempt is made to study critically about its role in the socio-religious context in relation to socio-political factors. Nothing is exaggerated, as every aspect dealt herewith is vouchsafed by the sayings, writings and actions of the connected Sufis themselves.

The Question of Influence of Sufism or Islam on Bhakti Movement : Some modern days scholars like A.L. Basham¹, Tarachand² etc., and Muslim scholars have interpreted that Sufi or Muslim influence is attributed to it for the following factors :

1. Worshipping God with devotion and love instead of performing elaborate rites and rituals.
2. Stressing unity of God.
3. Religious leaders meeting people in different parts instead of people going and meeting them.
4. Toleration advocated among different religions and religious sects.
5. Participation of all sectors of society without any caste or sex discrimination.
6. Promotion of participation of women in the movement.
7. Application of religion for Social justice.

Indian scholars have pointed out that in Hindu religion itself such principles have been in existence and influencing the society since Vedic period. The Bhakti movement developed in Tamilagam by the Alwars and Nayanmars incorporated solutions to all social problems with the clear direction for the participation of all in the social processes. In fact, the very concept of temple and temple related worship encompass the involvement of all sections of people without any discrimination as

vouchsafed by Agama and Vastu literature. There is no direct evidence to prove the influence of Islam on Hinduism³. After discussing the work of Ramanananda (14th cent.), Kabir (1438-1518), Chaitanya (1481-1530), Nanak (1469-1539) and others, U.N. Ghoshal categorically recorded that it must be admitted that such a fundamental Hindu institution, as caste remained for the most part unaffected by their teaching⁴. Therefore, it is necessary to study the origin of Sufism to find out the truth.

Origin of Sufism : The origin of Sufism has been camouflaged with wanton uncertainty and obscurity by the Islamic scholars, as they have often tried to hide many facts. While one group of them has tried faithfully attempted to trace its origin to Mohammed and Quran (65:12), the other group to its origin to the non-Islamic and non-Arabian roots. Some argue that the word Sufi might have originated from Suf = Wool as the Sufis were wearing woollen clothes; and some others from the word Safa = purity. For the metaphysical concepts of Sufism, credit is given to the Greek Plotinus, Pythagoreans (particularly, Niomachus), Empidocles and so on. The philosophical musings of numbers and geometry ('ilm-l-dad, Hindisah) were definitely taken from India. The spiritualized myths and legends of Sufism were pre-Islamic, copied from the Persian and Indian sources. The stories of Buddha were assimilated⁵. Reynold A. Nicholson points out more influence of Buddhism and Hinduism on Sufism⁶. In fact, the Indian (Hindu) works on arts and sciences were translated from Sanskrit and Persian, laying foundation of Arabic literature and science between 750-850 CE⁷. The Arabs called the Hindu snumerals Hindisah, but ironically, they are still mentioned as "Arabic numerals" instead of "Hindu numerals", even in Indian books! Surprisingly, the paintings depicting Prophet Mohammed, archangel Gabriel and other Sufi-connected themes show clearly Hindu influence; particularly, the women with bindi mark on their foreheads⁸. In many paintings, another significance that

can be noticed is the fiery halo around the heads, just like Agni, of Alexander (Zul Qarnayn : Quran 18:82-93), A'isha, Fatima, Umm-Salma and others. In India, its origin can only be traced back to 13th century⁹. S.A.A. Rizvi points out that the belief that the conquest of Sind at the time of the Umayyad Caliph al-Walid I (705-15) originated as a punitive expedition against the ruling Raja Dahir, after his pirates had seized some Muslims on a hajj to Mecca, is a myth¹⁰. Therefore, there is no surprise that such Indian influenced Sufism to have good reception.

Sufism and Islam : The orthodox Muslims and Islamic scholars claim that according to the tenets of Quran, Islam stands for formless worship, in spite of its contradictions connected with Ka'ba and Aswath stone in it, the number 786, Quran book, crossed swords with shield, calligraphed kalima and other paraphernalia. It is totally against idols, images and symbols representing Allah or the characteristics of Allah. In contrast, Sufism is based on symbols of all sorts and without symbolism, perhaps, there is no Sufism. The divine representations are perceived in such symbolic representations and philosophical concepts are attributed to them. Thus, metaphysical and philosophical concepts are revealed in various symbols, designs, forms, colours and calligraphies, incorporated in the places of religious worship and books. As already pointed out, there have been attempts to depict divine manifestations, Prophet Mohammed, his wives and others in paintings. That is why the orthodox Islam is totally against Sufism. In fact, Sufis and other followers have many times been declared "kafirs". The Jamat has always been against Sufism condemning that it is polluting Islam, thus, inviting the wrath of Allah. Moreover, the Islamic scholars are very much afraid of the exposure of the Indian origin of Sufism and perhaps Prophet Mohammed himself¹¹ and hence they have always played down the over enthusiastic moves of Sufi-scholars and research into Sufism. To counter and suppress the facts, the Sufi movement has been used for the conversion of Hindus and other anti-Hindu activities to please the fundamentalist forces and fanatic rulers. Some evidences are cited to prove that Sufism was prevalent even before the advent of Islam in the Middle East. There were people living in the Medina mosque practicing self-mortification, penance and meditation renouncing everything, known as Ahi-al-suffa or Ashab-I-suffa (the people of Verandah or simple people). Some scholars, thus, trace its origin to them. Sufism has also given metaphysical interpretations to the pre-Islamic practices absorbed by Mohammed into his

religion¹².

Sufism in India : Sufism is discovered in India, even before the advent of Islam in India by some scholars to prove that Islam entered India in peaceful manner to spread without the use of sword¹³. But, in all attempts, only the confusion of few Arabs with "Muslims" is noted, instead of inventing them. In any case, Sufi saints became instant attraction for the Hindus and they were respected as expected, because of their appearance, dress and exhibited behaviour. They even adapted and adopted Hindu methods to attract them : stories circulated about the miracles of Sufis : it was propagated that the Atharva Veda was faithfully practiced by them, that is why they were experts in driving away evil spirits and diseases caused by such spirits. They used to give oil, holy ash, leaves etc. with all paraphernalia or frankincense smoke, rolling beads (rosary), water (thirth), peacock feathers etc., Very often, Hindu women used to take their babes and children. Mohammed Ishaq Khan¹⁴ shows as to how the so-called "Rishi Movement" was an integral component of the process of Islamization started in the Kashmir valley in the wake of the introduction of the Sufi orders from Central Asia and Persia in the 14th century. The author also focuses on the tension that the Kashmir Brahmanic society experienced as a result of the advocacy of "certain values" by the Rishis, most significantly, the caste system! It is surprising to note the Sufis were indulged in the introduction of the so-called Caste system. This only goes to prove as to how they meddled with the Indian society to create tensions and divisions, so that they could fish in troubled waters.

Inculturation : Inculturation was the process of converting Hindus without changing their culture i.e. externally, they would be Hindus, but internally, they were Muslims (crypto-Muslims), following all practices of Hindus. One Shah Kalimu'llah Jahanabadi (1060-1650) in his methodology of manipulations advised the new converts to hide their status initially and reveal it only gradually or on the appropriate occasion, so that in the event of death, he would not be cremated and thus, attracting publicity for conversion¹⁵. Similarly, many converted Hindus to Islam continued to have their own way of life without changing name, dress, culture etc. The Gian tradition of Ismail Islam, Bengali Muslims' love for their language and culture. Benares Sunni community's belief in abjad (numerology), ramal (dice), kauri (cowrie shell), zij (astronomical/astological tables), janam kundali, patri, za'cha (horoscopes) and hath ki lakir, hasta rekha

(palm reading), Hindu laws for inheritance, marriage etc., applicable to Kshatriyas, circulation of puthi literature etc. prove the inculturation methods adapted and adopted by the Mohammedan rulers, Sufis and others at different times in different areas of Hindusthan (India). The Puthi literature contained many allegorical Hindu Puranas and terminology. In one of such books, *Nabi Vamsa*, Mohammed was considered as one of the avatars just like Brahma, Vishnu, Maheswar, Rama, Krishna, Narasimha, Vamana and others¹⁶. Pir Sadruddin is supposed to have been the author of literary work known as the *Das Avatar*, which correlated Islamic and Hindu religious personalities. In it the Prophet Mohammed was identified with Brahma, All the tenth incarnation of Vishnu, Adam with Shiva and himself with Balram¹⁷. Muslim form of *dasa avatars* was also presented limiting the tenth manifestation to Ali and his descendants - the Imams. Even the conversion ceremonies were predominantly accompanied with Hindu practices and symbols. Known as "Ghat-pat" (Ghat = water + pata = elevated place), spouted vessels were used for such ceremony. The communal drinking of *ab-i-shifa* (water of healing) was purposely related to both Muslim and Hindu *samvat* calendars and held on Fridays, the night of the New Moon (Chandrat) and on the occasion of other major Hindu festivals, when a large congregation was present usually. As an illustration, the following lines are quoted :

"The Sufis...did not adopt the Ismaili technique of gradual conversion...They established their *khanqahs* and shrines at places, which had already had a reputation for sanctity before Islam. Thus some of the traditional i.e. (Hindu) gatherings were transformed into new festivals (i.e. Muslim)"¹⁸.

Interestingly, now the Christian missionaries adapt and adopt very similar methodology. It would be an interesting study into this aspect as to whether Christians copied the inculturation method from Muslims or vice versa. On the other hand, Hindu religion does not advocate conversion and use such methodology.

Sufis Imitating Hindu Gurus : As already pointed out, the Sufis were like Hindu gurus/teachers with all limitations of dress, mannerism and interaction. They purposely used the following terminology during their discourses, conversations and debates : *Ishwar* = Allah, *avatar* = *Nabi/rasul*, *Vedas / kitab* = holy books, *Guru* = *hujur* and so on. While ochre and saffron robes were predominantly worn, beards grown and rosary beads rolling in their hands. Many miracles were attributed to

them. The supernatural elements; boons and gifts offered to the devotees; holy water (thirth), ash and flowers distributed; spouted earthen vessels used for *ab-i-shifa*; Ganges water substituted for *Zam Zam*, but glorifying it with usual healing attributes; though karma was not mentioned, the acts of the past, particularly, the bad ones were blamed for the present miseries and the sufferings of the devotees; the superiority of Allah, Mohammed and Sufi saints were glorified against the Hindu counterparts. Particularly, mosques, dargahs and *khanqahs* were established/built replacing/converting existing Hindu places of worship. Initiation (*Diksha*), meditation (*Fikr* = *dhyana*), Invocation (*Zikr* = *smarana*), litany (*Wird* = *manana*) and contemplation (*Shuhud* = final stage of *dhyana*) steps were accompanied with the following itineraries :

1. *Talab* (Yearning) for such union with Allah.
2. *Ishq* (Love) for such attainment of union.
3. *Marfat* (Enlightenment) after realization of the Supreme.
4. *Istaghraq* or *Fana* (Absorption) surrender.
5. *Tauhid* (Unity consciousness) experiencing Allah permeating all.
6. *Hairat* (Amazement) ecstasy attained at the sight of divinity. *Fuqr Wa Fana* (Nirvana or final stage).

Thus, all Hindu spiritual methods were also imitated and presented in the garb of Arabic terminology to cater to the needs of different sections of Hindu society. Besides silent *Zikr* accompanied with *tasbeeh* (rosary) consisting of 99 or 100 beads (The usage of rosary is an Indian origin. But, the Islamic and western scholars have tendency in their writings not to give credit to India for anything, practice or subject borrowed adapted and adopted from India, instead, they try to beat the hush by noting that so and so was Buddhist origin or might have been introduced from the people of orient and so on. Pope Pius V introduced rosary in Christianity in 1596 - thus they claim), oral *zikr* (*Bhajans*) were also used with added attraction. In contrast, Hindu gurus, saints and religious leaders do not indulge in such practices.

The Psychology of Conversion Adopted by the Sufis : With all these methods, the Sufis easily carried on their proselytization process. The rulers support to them was well planned and systematic. In fact, the Sufis had immense influence directing them to act according to their willingness in the process of Islamization. Conversion may be defined as the rapid, often dramatic, change in religious beliefs always accompanied with the transformation of a

psychological conflict into a physical state of symptoms and symbols. The convert will have always psychological conflicts exhibited in escapism, love-hate relationship, compensation, suppression, and other defence mechanism. He would vehemently and persistently argue for his conversion with extraordinary faith exhibited in his overreactions. He would declare that his accepted faith is the only way for salvation of humanity; he would plead, command, request, order and beg others to follow suit; even if he has committed a blunder by converting himself to other faith, he would try to justify his erred action. In such conditions, even the original or true believers would not be a match for him. To prove his loyalty, he is prepared to do anything. If we analyze the methods adapted and adopted by the Sufis and the circumstances in which such methods were applied with force and compulsion, their motive can easily be understood.

Conversion Methods used : The Gian of Nizari Ismailis, which faithfully records the following steps adopted for the conversion of Hindus between 16th and 19th centuries¹⁹ :

1. Anonymous arrival at a well known Hindu or Muslim religious centre or city;
2. Performance of a miracle to draw attention of the leaders or rulers of the area and to win over disciples;
3. Confrontation with a local saint or religious figure and triumph over him;
4. Conversion of the people in the city and
5. Departure.

In all these actions, it should be noted that the Muslim leaders/rulers aided and abetted with them using their authority and force. Saiyyad Muhammad Bin Nasiruddin Jafar Makki al-Hussani, the Khalifa of Nasiruddin Chirag-I-Delhi held that there were five reasons which led the people to embrace Islam²⁰ :

1. Fear of death (when option was given either to accept Islam or sword).
2. Fear of their families enslaved (after the execution of the head of the family or otherwise).
3. Propagation (of Islam) on the part of Muslims (i.e. the forceful and fearful methods adopted during their jhad against the kafirs, according to the tenets of Quran, Hadis and Shariat).
4. The lust for obtaining mawajib (pensions or rewards), ghanaim (booty) (running into lucrative amounts in those days), and
5. Tassub (bigotry or superstition? (super spiritual methods adopted to torture the gullible kafirs).

K.S. Lal divides the methods adopted into forcible and persuasive (less forcible) categories²¹ :

Forcible :

1. Choice offered between Islam and death.
2. Chain reactions started by powerful converts.
3. Economic measures.
4. Capture and enslavement of Hindu women, children and prisoners of war.
5. Marriages of Hindu men with Muslim women (and Muslim men with Hindu women by force).
6. Filling Muslim homes and harems with Hindu women.

Persuasive (less forcible) :

1. Beggars getting free food becoming faqirs.
2. Escape from punishment for crimes committed.
3. Dissatisfaction with one's religion.
4. Getting relief from jiziya and other heavy discriminatory taxes.
5. Obtaining employment or object of love or succession to property.
6. Professional advantages of Muslim patronage. Getting an audience with the Emperor or a robe of honour.

Thus, one can see as to how the psychology of conversion has fully been satisfied by the methods adopted.

The Connivance the Rulers : Though the Islamic rulers had never ruled Hindustan (India) completely, historians unwittingly divided the Indian History into ancient (Hindu), medieval (Muslim) and modern (British or Christian?) periods giving credit to the Mohammedan/Muslim rules. The following examples given prove the alliance of Sufi-Islamic rulers :

Sultan Mohammed Ghazni (961-1186) was glorified by Shah Waliullah (998-1030) and the latter even had gone to the extent of declaring that his horoscope had been identical with that of Mohammed (PBCH)! He very often addressed Muslim soldiers rousing them with the idea that they had been raised by Allah only for the purpose of jihad in order to root out polytheism at its core²². He inspired and urged Muslims to return to the Arabic language, dress, style and way of living, as a part of Islamization.

The Chishtiyya order of saints was the patron-saints of Muslim rulers endowed with all facilities. Shaik Abdur-Rahman Chisti advocated that the Chistiyyas were the sole protectors of the King and Islam. Many Sufis served in governments; received revenue-free land grants (madad-I-ma'ash) and stipends; they acted as Ambassadors and spies. Ra'is (Governor), ramil (revenue

collector), Amir (army Commander), Qazi (Islamic judge), Wakil (minister) all were suitably instructed to help the Sufis at any cost.

The Shattariyya, Shaikh Abdu'llah marched with his disciples dressed as soldiers from Central Asia to Bengal to convert Bengali kafirs. They had expertised yoga, meditation, Japa, Bhajan etc., and applied the same in Islamic garb to win over the gullibles.

Babur was influenced and impressed upon by Khwajaji maximum that Sufis were responsible for the election of Khalifas, the successors of the Mohammed (PBCH).

Shaikh Abdul-Haqq expounded during the reign of Akbar and Jahangir, a Kafir could not be an adil (just ruler) and therefore, they should be subjected to jihad. Ahmad Sirhindi (1564-1624) had written many letters to them to wage jihand against Kafirs.

Sufis of the Chistiyya Silsila in particular glorified the role of going ahead or leading the Mohammedan armies and spying for rulers²³. The Sufi Nizamud Din Awliya actively participated in jihads against the local population. Shaikh Nasirid-Din Mohammed (died in 1356) already pointed out the connivance of rulers with Sufis and vice versa in conversion by jihad, expounding the theme of Sufism. Advocating government service for Sufis, he quoted the following verse :

The essence of Sufism is not an external garment,

*Gird up your loins to serve the Sultan and be a Sufi*²⁴.

Sarah F.D. Ansari points out the role of Pirs-the hereditary Sufi saints, who had acted as mediators between the rulers and the ordinary people of Sind region, where Hinduism was flourishing before the Islamic invasion²⁵.

They selected rural areas purposely for their targets of proselytization, then, they were converted into Sufi centres with the administrative and military establishments. Thus, while the capitals and cities were captured with force, the rural areas were converted with both penetration and force applying all the techniques of psychology of conversion. Whenever or wherever, the Sufis had problem in taking over any property or occupying temples and mutts, the Sultans had supported them, as kafirs were not for any justice according to the tenets of Quran, Hadis and Shariat. Even, Qazis gave favorable judgements only in support of Sufis or Sultans. With the blessings of the Sufis, the Sultans had a duty to *cleanse the land from the vices of Infidelity and pentheism*. Thus, Sultan Firoz Tuglaq, Sikander

Buyshikan, Jalaludin of Bengal, Mahmud Beghara of Gujarat and the Emperor Aurangzeb have very often mentioned as royal missionary of Islam. Many details can be noted from their own sources like Ain-I-Akbari, Akbar Namah, Badshah namah, Tarikh-I-Firoz Shahi, Alberuni's India, Futuh-ul-Buldan, Kitab-ul-Aqalim, Muruj-ul-Zuhab, Siyar-ul-Auliya, etc.

Character of Sufis : Psychologists define character as a consistent and enduring property of quality by means of which a person can be identified, and his personality is considered from an ethical or moral point of view. The character of Sufis themselves or by their followers or other Muslim scholars has been so hagiographed, panegyricized and mythologized that their true colour and actual qualities can only be gleaned and understood from their speeches and writings recorded in the original sources. They have double standards for every thing; in their genealogical position, they claim biological and spiritual descendancy from Mohammed, Ali, Fatima etc.; in their symbolic comparison, they claim that Ka'ba and temple are one and the same, but, mentally they are so obsessed with the destruction of temples; portraying saintly look outwards, they use dubious methods to place themselves *in spiritually intoxicated states*; the presents they receive from their patrons include captured women; in spite of their knowledge about Hinduism, Hindu scriptures and Hindus, they cannot appreciate, but condemn them as kafir/kufre (infidelity), kafiri (unclean/ignorant) and kafirs (infidels/unbelievers). Their minds have been so indoctrinated with such ideas, that they could heap only hatred on them. They, thus, at one stage, started their Islamization process to Islamize both Muslims and Hindus after conversion. One would be bewildered, dumfounded or even frightened to understand the minds of Sufis from their writings; they were so cruel towards Hindus and prepared to commit any atrocity on them in the name of religion.

Some enthusiastic Muslim writers claim that there had been some female saints following Sufism. Surprisingly, such claimed *Female saints of Sufism* existed only after 16th century : Bibi-Jamal Kahutan (separated from her husband and chose the lead an ascetic life), Jahan-Ara Begum of Qadiriyya order (who was accused of having licentious relations with her father after the death of her mother Mumtaz Mahal²⁶). Indirect references have been attributed to the mothers of Shaikh Abdu'l-I-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi, Khawaja Baqi Bi'llah and Miyan Mir, as they played an important role in making their sons,

Sufis. But, the association of women with Sufi movement greatly helped its prospects in different ways for various purposes. The clout of performance of miracles by Sufis and maulvis attracted more women than men, who readily approached them with the desires of removing diseases of their babies, children relatives and of course begetting children. In fact, at many shrines dancing girls were put up nautch in honour of the saints²⁷. A. Manucci, Kahfikhan²⁸ and others have given many examples as to how Hindu women, girls and children were taken away, converted to Islam and made them dancers, singers and slave-girls. They were sent to the harems of Sultan and other places. K.S. Lal²⁹ points out that the number of such converts was so large that even their Hindu names could not be changed to Islamic.

Selection of Places For Sufi Centres : The so called Sufi centres, Lahore, Multan, Uch, Ajmer, Delhi, Baduan, Kanauj, Kalpi, Biharshariff, Maner, Lakknauti, Patna, Burhampur, Daulatabad, Gulbarga, Bidar, Bijapur, Golconda, Arcoit, Vellore and Tiruchirappalli have been the ancient places of Hindu pilgrimages with famous Hindu temples, where Hindus used to flock together during festivals, Kumba melas etc. therefore, the Sufis selected these places, first occupying near the temples and then, slowly entered the temples and started converting them into their places of worship. The strategy adopted was on some pretext, the temple would be demolished, partly demolished to remove the outside Hindu architectural features, the idols removed/broken by the rulers or the army, accompanied by the Sufi forces paving way for them to occupy.

"Many of these early saints were endowed with Hindu personalities and the places where they settled and were buried possessed strong pre-Islamic connections. Lal Shahbaz Qalandar was known to his Hindu followers as 'Raja Bharatari'; Pir Patho became 'Raja Gopichand'; and Pir Haji Mango was called Lala Jasraj. Both Pir Patho and Mango Pir were centuries old centres of Hindu pilgrimage. At Mango Pir, crocodiles living in tanks by warm water were dedicated to the saints and became the object of a cult, which was repeated elsewhere in Sind"³⁰.

This proves that not only places of Hindu importance, but, also appropriated religious leaders were appropriated and converted into Sufism to serve their purpose. Every time a myth would be floated about the success of Islam over the Kafirs, glorifying the miracles of Sufis and acts of ruling collaborators. Such myth filled and mystified

books were written and circulated de-Hinduising the nature of the converted places. Though such works are now considered as later-day fabrications, it is to be noted that the methods mentioned were faithfully used by the Sufis for their purpose³¹. This book also gives interesting details about the role of Sufis in conversion). As they have been totally against the concept of orthodox clergy, it is not at all surprising to condemn such Sufi literature—*Malfūzat* and *Maktubat*—by some Islamic scholars.

Opposition to Sufism by the Orthodox Islam : It has to be noted and clearly understood as to why the orthodox Islam opposed Sufism. Sufism adapted and adopted Hindu symbols, philosophy and methodology in religious activities to attract all sections of people, particularly *kafirs*, including women, whereas, within the domain of Islam, there is no room for *kafirs* as only *momins* allowed. Therefore, the Islam as such stoutly opposed Sufism. *Islamization* movements like Wahabi movement were started only to contain the Sufi movement or de-Hinduise and Islamise the Sufism itself.

Sufism and Wahabi Movement : The fanatic and fundamentalist Wahabi movement was started under the guise of revivalism in the middle of 18th century by one Mohammed Abdul Wahab, in Nejd, Arabia, mainly to counter and denounce traditional glosses (philosophical, mystic and apocryphal versions of Quran, Hadis and Shariat texts), saint worship (including the worship of martyrs, invisible Imams and others), pilgrimages (except to the Ka'ba), use of wine, tobacco and other intoxicants and all other forms of non-Islamic practices crept into Islam. Shah Walilullah Dellavi (1703-1762) launched the revivalist Wahabi movement in India to eliminate all elements of tomb and saint worship, Hindu beliefs and practices found among the Muslims and converted Hindus persisted mostly in the Sufi orders. But, at the same time, both opposing groups conspired together and turned their movements against Hindus in declaring jihad. Though they criticized and condemned the Sufis for their forced trances with intoxicants, misleading others into believing that they possessed the ultimate truth and use of extensive Hindu philosophy and spiritual practices, encouraged and collaborated with them as far as in converting gullible Hindus into the Islamic fold is concerned. The think-tank formed expectedly worked together for Islamization of Indian society, including Sufi orders, resulting in more jihads, conversion and temple destruction.

Rehashed and Half-baked Theology of Sufis : Before condemning Sufism for drifting towards Hinduism,

its theology should be studied. The Islamic scholars themselves have recorded that a sect of Sufis which was imbued with Hindu, Chinese and Tibetan beliefs of the eternity of the spirit shocked the majority of (Islamized) Sufis, who believed in the Islamic concept of spirit (Quaran. XVII-85)³². The spirit was made a substance rather than an attribute and claimed that it comes and goes at the command of Allah. To believing Muslims, it is not eternal-*qadim*, whereas, the Sufis started to assert that it is permanent/eternal. Al-Beruni himself has pointed out the similarities between the ideas of Sufis and Sankhya philosophy, patanjali and Bhagwatgita. The Quran categorically says that the dead will not return to the world. But, Shias believe in the concepts of *Mahdi* (future deliverer, ultimate restorer of the true Islam) and *Rajahat* (coming again, second coming, avatar. According to this, after the appearance of Mahdi, Hazrat Ali, Hasan, Hussain and other Imams also appear again and their enemies Abu Bakkar, Umar, Udhman, Mu Aviya Ejith and others were also raised for punishment. Abu Bakkar and Umar would be hanged on trees during the reign of Mahdi. One Sharif Murtaja gives these details³³. The Sufis had been so clever in manipulating such ideas by Islamization, that they appeared as Islamic. In spite of the absorption and assimilation and modification of Hindu thought in their theology, they could not have created an impact of love, peace and reconciliation, because of their fundamentalism and fanaticism, leading to later day social conflicts.

Islamic Imperialism : The psychology of Islamic Imperialism is amply revealed in the doctrine of Sufism and the acts of Sufis in India : Extension of Islamic Empire; trans-territorial loyalties; controlling trade and commerce; manipulating social and political processes, repudiation of liberty, equality and fraternity in favour of Islamic fanaticism, fundamentalism and hierarchy – all in the name of Allah. This concept is so ingrained in them from childhood in such a way, when he/she grows into a man, he cannot think anything beyond the ambit of Quran, Hadis and Shariat, whatever may be his position and however he may be educated and refined. They are made to believe that only Muslims are pure, great, intelligent and powerful people with a hegemonic right to rule and enjoy the world, whereas, all other non-Muslims are kafirs, infidels, heathens and barbarians and hence, impure, mean, idiotic and powerless with no right to live, but, can live by paying Jiziya or serving the Islamic state. Thus, every inhuman activity committed was justified in the name of

religion. The Sufis played a major role in such a formation of thought process.

Sufism as an Ideology : Sufism = Hinduism + Islam —had it been the position, there would have been perfect harmony and peace in India without any Hindu-Muslim problem. But, jihad and conversion with the factor of Islamization upset and disturbed the formula, as shown below :

Sufism = Jihad + Conversion + Islamization.

Sufism = Jihad + Conversion -/- Islamization.

Islamization = Jihad + Conversion - Hinduism.

Only about 20% of Sufis, perhaps, faithfully followed the principles of Hinduism and tried to bridge Hindus and Muslims with their eclectic and syncretic methods in knowing the mysteries of God, scriptures, creation and man, whereas 80% of Sufis had been the most fanatic, fundamentalist and extremist in their attitude, behaviour and encounter with Hindu religion and Hindus, as exhibited in their own writings and other recorded sources. Therefore, religion should not be used as an ideology. The tendency of using such an ideology for political gains is very dangerous, particularly, when the social processes are manipulated.

Eclectic and Syncretic Movements : For clarity, the expression *Eclectic* is used to denote original Bhakti movement characterized with Indian elements and *Syncretic* to Sufism as it was evidently conceived, developed and systematized using Hindu symbols and methods to reach Islamic ends as explained. The fact is that though the Sufist methodology appears to be syncretic, actually it is eclectic, as ultimately, the believers had to accept *Allah as the only God*. Evidently the word eclectic is used to denote selective (versatile, resourceful, discriminating) and universal (catholic, general, diverse) methods. It is very clear that the Syncretic movement had been the development of later period starting from 13th to 17th centuries, whereas the original Eclectic movement pertaining to 7th-9th centuries itself contained all factors, which are enumerated as proof for the influence of Sufism or Islam by modern scholars, is not correct. If we compare the lives, songs, works and acts of Hindu saints of the material period with that of Sufis, the truth is revealed. Therefore, Sufism is definitely a reactionary movement first aimed to counter bhakti movement and inculturate Hindus and then, Islamized with an attempt to retain it as separate entity to satisfy the needs of majority of converts.

Conclusion : The above discussion amply proves that Islam or Sufism did not influence Hinduism, on the other

way, Hindu religion and Hindus have contributed much for the development of Islam and Sufism. In fact, many Hindus before and after conversion contributed much to the development of Arabic literature, science and technology and even for Hadis (S.A.A. Rizvi, opt.cit, Vol. I, p. 109, 320). The Sufism evolved and developed in India was only in 13th century and it could not have any influence over the past period. That Sufis adapted and adopted profusely Hindu philosophy, terminology, dress, mannerism etc. prove that it was influenced by Hindu religion.

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A girl playing a drum, p. 69.
Abraham surrounded by flames with fiery halo, p. 77.
Joseph enthroned, listening to music played by Zulaykh's maids, p. 81.
Fatima sitting by Aisha and Umm Salma, p. 88.
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